



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

JUL 11 2006

Paul K. Brewster  
Forest Supervisor  
Green Mountain and Finger Lakes  
National Forests  
US Forest Service  
231 N. Main St.  
Rutland, VT 05701

Dear Mr. Brewster:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Finger Lakes National Forest, final environmental impact statement (EIS) (CEQ #20060232), pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The Finger Lakes National Forest (FLNF) is one of the largest, continuous public land areas in the region. EPA recognizes the challenges confronting the FLNF caused by increasing development, insect damage and invasive species, fire hazard, and conflicting forest use demands. We commend the new planning format that integrated an over-arching vision and forest-specific strategies linked to national goals. Of special note are the forest-specific goals and objectives and their characterization of desired conditions.

In August 2005, EPA sent a letter commenting on the draft EIS, which we rated as Environmental Concerns - Insufficient Information (EC-2) with the understanding that if the Forest Service implements additional resource protection modifications to Alternative 3, we would support the Forest Plan and final EIS. The final EIS adequately addressed our concerns and we believe that the changes to the Revised Forest Plan will establish the FLNF as the anchor for natural resource protection and biological diversity in the greater Finger Lakes region and beyond. We can therefore, offer our support for the implementation of Alternative 3, given that the protections to resources and the identified modifications directed toward further ecological resource protection are made. Also, we would be pleased to assist the Forest Service in achieving Revised Forest Plan goals in whatever ways we can as the site-specific projects and analyses are conducted.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this final EIS. If you have any questions, please contact me at 212-637-3504 or David J. Carlson, of my staff, at 212-637-3502 or at [carlson.david@epa.gov](mailto:carlson.david@epa.gov).

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Filippelli", is written over the typed name.

John Filippelli, Chief  
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch